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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5857
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 000558

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/15/2016

TAGS: PHUM PGOV UP TU CY KCRM KWMN

SUBJECT: POST ASSISTS IN REPATRIATION OF UKRAINIAN
TRAFFICKING VICTIM

REF: 04 NICOSIA 2296

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald L. Schlicher, reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) On April 13, Ukrainian Ambassador Borys Humeniuk telephoned Ambassador Schlicher about a 23-year old Ukrainian woman, Oxana Nahod, who had been trafficked to the northern part of Cyprus -- where she was reportedly being mistreated and forced to work against her will in a night club. In a subsequent meeting with poloff, Ambassador Humeniuk said that Ukrainian security services in Kiev had reported that Nahod's life was in danger and that she was suicidal. The security services had said that another five Ukrainian women with Nahod were also being held against their will, but Humeniuk was unable to provide additional information on these women. Citing GOC sensitivities over contact with Turkish Cypriot officials, Humeniuk requested U.S. assistance in locating and returning Nahod from the "TRNC," where she had reportedly been taken after arriving at Larnaca airport in the south. Shortly after our meeting with the Ukrainians here, Embassy Kiev contacted us to relay similar concerns they had heard about Nahod from the GOU.

¶2. (C) Post facilitated contact between the Ukrainian embassy and the Turkish Cypriot immigration police, who found Nahod at the "Crazy Girls" nightclub and immediately removed her to accommodation at Ercan airport. The police told Embassy Nicosia that Nahod had signed a statement saying "she was fine," but that she wanted to go home because her mother had heart trouble. They also claimed that Nahod had said she planned to return to work in Cyprus as soon as her mother had recovered. A representative from the Ukrainian Embassy visited her at the airport and later reported that although she was frightened, Nahod was unharmed. Nahod reportedly told the Ukrainian diplomat that despite information to the contrary, she had entered Cyprus through Ercan airport in the north. She wanted to leave because she was frightened after witnessing a beating of her fellow "artistes" at the nightclub. She had no plans to return to Cyprus.

¶3. (C) The Turkish Cypriot police arranged for her deportation to Ukraine through Istanbul, and Turkish Cypriot officials report that she left the "TRNC" on a Turkish Airways flight in the early hours of April 14.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: This is the first time Post has seen the Ukrainian embassy take an active interest in a trafficking case, despite the fact that a majority of identified trafficking victims in Cyprus are Ukrainian. Not more than two months ago, Ambassador Humeniuk reportedly told one of our TIP contacts that trafficking victims were "not his problem" since they "knew what they were getting into" when they came to Cyprus. That attitude has been reflected in his embassy's actions; until now, the "diplomatic working group"

we formed last year to cooperate on TIP matters with local Ukrainian, Russian and Romanian representatives has been largely inactive. We are guardedly optimistic that this incident may herald a more serious engagement on the part of Ukrainian diplomats here. For their part, the Turkish Cypriot police appear to have been very responsive to the Ukrainian request for assistance in this case -- as they have in previous cases when we have approached them on behalf of TIP victims (reftel). When we spoke to "President" Talat's private secretary on the matter, he immediately offered "any help you need." Although the north has a long way to go in combating its significant TIP problem, their speedy action in this case is encouraging. END COMMENT.

SCHLICHER